

67010-072
PA-004.2715-USREMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-9 and 22-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Titterington, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,316,644) in view of WO 2004/086541 in view of *Fujii, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,798,946). For the reasons set forth below, Applicant disagrees with the basis for the rejection of these claims and believes these claims to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 requires in pertinent part "said volume is sized larger than said protrusion prior to insertion of said protrusion into said volume." The Examiner acknowledges that this feature is not taught by the combination of *Titterington, et al.* and WO '541. Indeed, the Examiner seeks to supply this missing element with the teaching of *Fujii, et al.* The Examiner contends that Figures 8, 9, 10 and 12 teach a "sealing configuration wherein a protrusion (24) is sized to be smaller than a volume (14) before insertion of the protrusion into the volume." The Examiner contends that the combination of *Titterington, et al.* and WO '541 would benefit from the teaching of *Fujii, et al.* because any bonding agent would not be forced out of the volume by the projection. However, the welding technique of WO '541 is incompatible with *Fujii, et al.* Specifically, as shown by WO '541, rib 25 matches groove 30. Accordingly, welding of rib 25 to groove 30 results in a fusing of materials not only at bottom of groove 30 but also along its sides. Expanding groove 30 as the Examiner suggests would eliminate contact of ribs 25 with sides of groove 30 to thereby reduce the quality of seal taught by WO '541. Moreover, *Fujii, et al.* teaches away from its combination with the vibrational welding technique of WO '541. Specifically, *Fujii, et al.* seeks to prevent a liquid bonding agent from being forced out of groove

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14. Vibration welding as taught by WO '541 would likely cause such liquid bonding agent to, in fact, be forced out of groove 14. For these reasons, the combination of *Fujii, et al.* with WO '541 is improper. Accordingly, claim 1 and its dependents, claims 2-9, 22-26 stand in condition for allowance.

In addition, the Examiner rejected dependent claims 7 and 9. Claim 7 requires, "said first protrusion spaced radially from said second protrusion relative to said axis" while claim 9 requires, "said first volume spaced radially from said second volume relative to said axis." The Examiner contends that this feature is taught by Figure 3D of WO '541. However, WO '541 teaches rectangular plates. Therefore, it cannot teach radially spacing of either protrusions or volumes. Therefore, claim 7 and 9 are separately allowable.

The Examiner also rejected claim 27 as obvious. Claim 27 requires, "a tortuous path." However, this feature is not shown by any of the cited references. Applicant requests the Examiner's basis for contending that one of ordinary skill in the art would find it obvious to create "a tortuous path." Because there is no such basis, Applicant believes that claim 27 and its dependants, claims 28-29, stand in condition for allowance.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant requests allowance of claims 1-9 and 22-29.

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Applicant believes that no additional fees are necessary, however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482 in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

CARLSON, GASKEY & OLDS

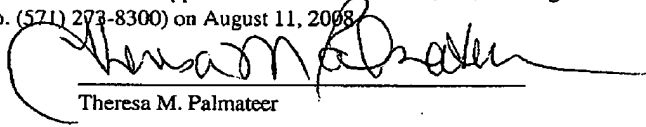
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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE

I hereby certify that this Response, relative to Application Serial No. 10/814,019, is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office (Fax No. (571) 273-8300) on August 11, 2008.


Theresa M. Palmateer

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